

Steps to prevent infiltration in border areas

1871. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMAR AGARWALLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) in the post-Kargil experience whether Government have taken any steps to prevent infiltration of intruders through the border areas in different sectors; and

(b) if so, what specific steps have been taken during the last one year particularly in making our soldiers more equipped?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) and (b) A constant watch is maintained on the situation both at the border as well as in the hinterland and all possible measures are taken to prevent infiltration into the State and to frustrate the designs of the mentors of the terrorists across the border.

Modernisation of Armed Forces is a continuous process necessitated by changing threat perceptions and advancements in technology. It has always been the policy of the Government to keep Armed Forces in a state of preparedness and to equip them with the latest weaponry and equipment to discharge their responsibility.

Test of IRBMs

1872. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the 'Hindustan Times' dated the 18th July, 2000 captioned 'Missiles: the Missing link in India's deterrent';

(b) whether it is a fact that India is making slow progress in its Intermediate Range Ballistic Missile Programme by having done only a single IRBM test during the last five years whereas every time, China, Pakistan and Iran fire an India-reachable missile; and

(c) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) No, Sir. India's missile programme is progressing

completion of technology demonstration of capability for re-entry technology, closed loop guidance, and manoeuvrability required for longer range missiles under programme Agni, a flight test of the longer range IRBM class missile Agni II has been undertaken on 11th April, 1999 from a mobile launcher. Thus we have reached the point of operationalisation of longer range Agni.

Main Battle tank Arjun

1873. SHRI R.P. GOENKA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state;

(a) whether the indigenously designed Main Battle Tank (MBT) "Arjun", which has been in the pipeline for the last 15 years, will roll out in the year 2003.

(b) if so, the features of the Main Battle Tank "Arjun";

(c) whether "Arjun" will meet the requirements of the modern warfare as set out by the Army;

(d) if not, the efforts being made to up-date the Tank;

(e) whether the procurement of equipment to be mounted on the MBT and other spare parts is yet to be negotiated; and

(f) if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI HARIN PATHAK): (a) Yes, Sir, the MBT "Arjun", is scheduled to roll out in the year 2003.

(b) A statement is attached (*See below*).

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) Does not arise, in view of (c) above.

(e) Negotiations have been completed for all the major systems and sub-assemblies required for manufacture of MBT Arjun and in most of the cases, orders have also been placed.

(f) Not applicable, in view of (e) above.